

Hi, I am Rachel and this is Master Sergeant Welch, Master Sergeant Burnah and Technical Sergeant King. I am going to talk today about Memorial Day and Military Funerals and how they are important to me. At the end, you will be able to ask questions. I will pass around the pictures and medals.

Memorial Day is an American Holiday that honors the men and women who died while serving in the US Military.

My Dad served in the Air Force for about 23 years. He was first a firefighter and was stationed in Germany and Maryland. He then became an officer and served as a Flight Nurse. During his time in the military, he was deployed three times to serve in the Middle East, in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. As a flight nurse, he flew in planes that became like hospitals in the air. He helped take care of soldiers who were wounded or sick and were going back home. Here is a picture of one of the planes he would fly on.

I was four the last time my dad was deployed overseas. This is a picture of when I first saw him when he got home! My Dad was having a hard time walking when he was there, and soon after he got home, he found out he had cancer. My dad died on December 1, 2018. Because he was a veteran, he had Military Honors at his funeral. Military Honors is our nation's way of showing gratitude and respect to the person who died.

The Military Honors are done by the Honor Guard, like Master Sergeant Burnah and Technical Sergeant King. The Honors include: Folding and Presenting an American Flag to give to the family; A Three-Volley Salute, and playing a song called Taps.

This is the flag that was presented to my mom at my dad's funeral. The flag is folded in a very specific way. Each fold of the flag represents something, for example life and honor. Here is a picture of how the flag should be folded.

Master Sergeant Burnah and Technical Sergeant King will demonstrate how the flag is folded during a military funeral.

Flag folded.

Thank you. The next honor is called the Three-Volley Salute and is usually done by 3 to 7 members of the Honor Guard. They shoot a gun into the air three times. The cartridges are blank, so no bullets come out. This custom started during European wars. They would stop fighting so the dead and wounded could be removed from the battlefield. When they were done, they shot three shots into the air to signal that fighting could resume. Here is a picture of Air Force soldiers doing a Three-Volley Salute.

The last honor is the playing of Taps. Here is a picture of an Air Force soldier playing Taps at a funeral. The song was used in the Civil War to call a "Lights out" at night to the soldiers. In the 1800s, the Army started using it at military funerals and memorial services. It is played on Memorial Day. Mrs. Baker will play it for us now.

Thank you. I also brought some metals and military coins that I found of my Dad's that I found interesting, if you would like to look at them. Does anyone have any questions?